

EPI Update for Friday, August 12, 2011

Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)

Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- **Back to school plans include immunization check**
- **Researchers use Twitter to predict spread of the 2009 H1N1 pandemic**
- **Inhalation anthrax case in Minnesota**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Back to school plans include immunization check

Healthcare providers are reminded to ensure patient immunizations are up-to-date in preparation for going back to school. Iowa law requires children to receive immunizations prior to attending a licensed child care center or school.

For more information on immunization recommendations, visit:

www.idph.state.ia.us/ImmTB/Immunization.aspx?prog=Imm&pg=Laws

Researchers use Twitter to predict spread of the 2009 H1N1 pandemic

A recently published study suggests information shared via Twitter can be used to predict the extent and severity of infectious disease outbreaks like the 2009 H1N1 pandemic. Researchers collected and analyzed public tweets relating to the 2009 H1N1 outbreak to see if they could track the spread of H1N1 more rapidly than current methods. They also analyzed information from Twitter in order to gauge public concerns about the H1N1 virus.

The analysis showed information from Twitter could be used to rapidly estimate the scope of the outbreak. So in theory, public health officials could use Tweets to help shape and direct their response to an emerging outbreak almost in real-time. In addition, the Twitter data showed the public responded to educational messages aimed at reducing fears about H1N1.

To read the entire article, visit:

www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0019467

Inhalation anthrax case in Minnesota

The Minnesota Department of Health and CDC are investigating a confirmed case of inhalational anthrax in an individual who is believed to have acquired the infection from the natural environment. The individual was hospitalized in Minnesota after traveling through North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, and South Dakota. The individual had exposure to soil and animal remains in these states where anthrax cases periodically occur.

For more information about anthrax, visit:

www.idph.state.ia.us/IDPHChannelsService/file.ashx?file=6026896B-910C-49AD-B106-CE2EBE7DFBE2

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

None

Have a healthy, happy week!

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